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AUGUST 2020 | VOLUME 11 | ISSUE 8

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Women's equality: 19th Amendment
turns 100. **Page 8**



MEET YOUR
VENDOR: **FRED
ALLEN**, PAGE 3



GROUNDCOVER

NEWS AND SOLUTIONS FROM THE GROUND UP | WASHTENAW COUNTY, MICH.



Who are you
voting for
August 4?

We talked to the candidates on your ballot. **Pages 4-7**

Groundcover News does not participate in candidate endorsements.

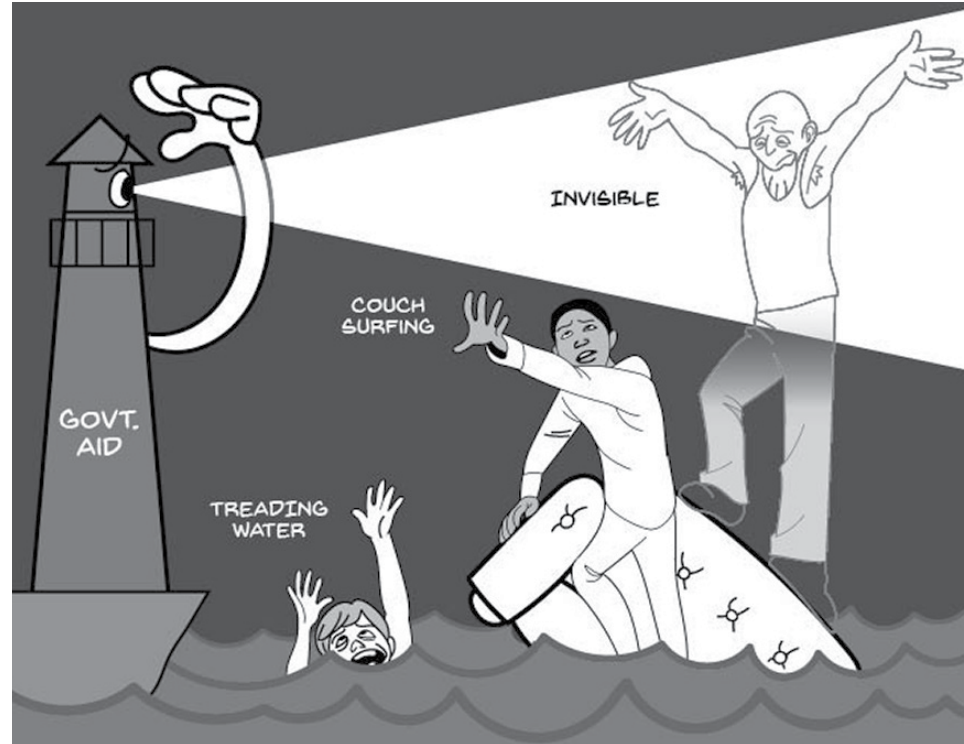
Informal sector must be an aim of targeted assistance



SUSAN BECKETT
Publisher

His statement about targeting assistance reminded me of something that has troubled me for a long time. There is a segment of vulnerable people in the United States who need assistance most but rarely fit into a neat category for getting it. They scrape together an existence doing odd jobs. Without a salary or savings, they can never lease a place to live, but they still find ways to be independent and avoid shelters. They rent a room at the local fleabag hotel or a couch at a friend's place by the week. Sometimes they camp. They are often excluded from government programs like food assistance because of an inability to document their expenses.

Their informal rentals are frequently in places where the owner would get into trouble for renting out part of their unit. Yet without such arrangements, the already strained shelters and housing programs would not be able to accommodate them. This leaves them no recourse but sleeping on public property.



Until the stimulus incentive, most did not file tax returns and were basically invisible. Many still are. When targeting assistance in the next pandemic relief bill,

the reality of these people needs to be recognized, and assistance in meeting their basic needs included. We've turned a blind eye for far too long.

Is racism a factor in lack of affordable housing?

JERRY CHARBONNEAU
Groundcover contributor

I was so surprised that the issue of racism was brought up in a recent city council meeting that I felt compelled to share this with Groundcover readers. It is time in Ann Arbor and across the nation to reflect on racism and how it impacts affordable housing. Ann Arbor Housing Commission Executive Director Jennifer Hall made the following powerful remarks on racism in housing at a city council meeting on July 6. I hope Ms. Hall will write articles for Groundcover News elaborating on her presentation and, in particular, describe the face of racial

segregation in Ann Arbor.

"About a year or so ago, I provided a book called 'The Color of Law' by Richard Rothstein to the Mayor and all City Council members, to help us all understand the institutional racist history of housing policy in the United States. I've been working on affordable housing for 30 years, and I did not fully understand this history until I read the book, even though I see it and deal with it on a daily basis.

"I just want to remind folks that this [property under consideration for development] is public property owned by the entire citizenry of Ann Arbor, not just the neighbors who are adjacent to it. The City has owned it for [could be]

hundreds of years, so if we're going to make a policy decision based only on the people who are living next to public property, then you're making a policy decision that excludes most of the public. That's particularly problematic when we're talking about housing ... due to the long history of exclusionary, segregationist housing policies that are perpetuated by federal, state and local governments. This includes all housing; it includes subsidized housing. It includes million-dollar homes.

"If you were to talk to somebody who lives in Ann Arbor who is a Black person who is in their 60s or 70s, they will still remember when you could put a deed restriction on a property

excluding anyone who is not white from owning or living in that property unless they are live-in domestic help. They can remember redlining. That was not that long ago in our history. The neighborhoods that we have and the neighborhoods that we're dealing with are already segregated by income and, to a lesser degree, also by race because of that history.

"If we're going to make housing policies, we need to make them also address that historical segregation. Don't forget that *Washtenaw County is the eighth most racially segregated county in the United States*, and Ann Arbor has contributed to that racial segregation."

GROUNDCOVER

Mission

Creating opportunity and a voice for low-income people while taking action to end homelessness and poverty.

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MEET YOUR VENDOR



Fred Allen, vendor No. 170

In one sentence, who are you?

A nice person who likes to help others.

Where do you normally sell Groundcover?

People's Food Co-op and downtown on Main St.

When and why did you start selling Groundcover?

I had a stroke and wanted to get out of the house.

What's your favorite thing about selling Groundcover?

Meeting new people.

What is a typical day like for you?

Selling Groundcover and working around the house.

What's the most interesting thing that ever happened to you while selling Groundcover?

Meet the mayor of AA and City Council.

How would you like to see Ann Arbor/Washtenaw County change for the better?

Help the homeless more.

Is there anything else you'd like folks to know about you?

I am on the board of M.I.S.S.I.O.N.



A vote for Kanye and managing mental illness

American rapper Kanye West is one of millions of people who struggle with bipolar disorder and depression. While many go unnoticed, there are those such as myself who have been diagnosed and found treatment.

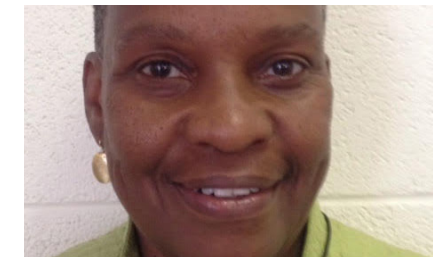
For years I struggled with the decision whether or not to take medication. Finally, after having a serious bout of depression that lasted from my summer break from teaching into the fall, I decided to take the medication that had been recommended to me.

It is not uncommon for those suffering from mental health issues to forego taking their "meds." There is an overriding feeling that the medication will alter one's personality or, in Kanye's case, their creativity.

As a baby boomer, it took me some time to realize that the new generation of treatment drugs are far different from those of the past. While I was uncertain how these new medications would affect me, my depression at the time had become so severe that I decided that my life could only improve by taking it. And it has.

Since that time, I have continued to compose both songs and poetry. Yet there are some days when, despite everything, there may be a mix-up in my refill schedule or something else that may cause me to go without it.

Admittedly on those days there is a noticeable difference that allows me to work with less inhibition. But I also



LIT KURTZ
Groundcover vendor No. 159

know that those moments are when I need to remain diligent about my boundaries and my relationship to the world around me.

It is also in those moments that I can appreciate that Kanye stopped taking his medication for six months in order to put his full, raw energies into producing the likes of his 2012 Grammy-winning album, "My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy."

Studies have shown links between creativity and mood disorders. Many talented musicians have struggled with taming their mental illness without quashing the tremendous creativity that comes with it. Kanye has said that bipolar is his superpower.

And while he may be right in that assessment, taking medication can harness that superpower and give it focus. If only one could turn those moments on and off at convenience without the accompanying reckless behavior.

Perhaps a new generation of medications that can resolve that dilemma is on the horizon. But, for

now, Kanye and all of us who are dealing with mental illness need to practice self-regulation.

Despite its arguable downsides, mood-stabilizing medication has allowed me to face the challenges in my life, including homelessness. I have had the clarity to write for Groundcover News and somehow manage the complexities of life without mainstream housing.

So, bipolar is my superpower as well. I still take on huge projects, but with the superior class of medications I am becoming more adept at managing them without feeling overwhelmed. There is reason to feel optimistic and hopeful about life with mental illness in today's world. We should celebrate the enormous advancements in medicine and appreciate mental illness for its peculiarities — that often feed the creative muse.

So, if Kanye indeed runs for president, he may be the first to openly acknowledge his battle with mental illness. It would be a sign to all Americans that mental illness does not have to destroy dreams. It would shed light on the tremendous strides that have been made in the area of mental health.

I am convinced that once Mr. West applies his creative energy towards striking the delicate balance needed to negotiate life with mental illness, he will find a path which may lead him to provide the unique form of leadership that only Ye can do.

Boober update

KEVIN SPANGLER
Groundcover vendor No. 307

Raising sufficient capital for turning a dream into a shareable reality is rarely easy. I have many passion projects in the works. One is to self-publish a book entitled "Rising Out of Depression and Going Up the Royal Road," which will first be published as a free magazine called "Universal Voice." Publishing these is on the back burner due to insufficient capital.

Currently, I'm working on a massive marketing campaign consisting of two mobile billboards, coasters, yard signs, door hangers and advertising on social media, all to launch an amazing transportation app. The app is sponsored by Bloom City Club, 8 Ball Saloon and KW Words, and is in the final testing stages. Once the app goes live, we hope to do a lot of hiring. Normally, Boober has over 40 people working this time of year. This year, we're at 12.

LETTER TO EDITOR

The July 2020 issue of Groundcover News was one of the best I've read in a long time (it has been a while since I was downtown).

I appreciated the vendor voices article, thought the poetry section was incredible, enjoyed the beautiful artwork in time of COVID, and Will Shakespeare's feature article about George Floyd and police brutality really hit the nail on the head.

What happened to Mr. George Floyd was horrendous. Mr. Shakespeare's article eloquently describes the facts surrounding his murder by police, how we got to this point as a nation and the subsequent aftershocks felt around the world in the form of protests.

History will show that this was a pivotal point in our nation's history, and Mr. Shakespeare's article captured the story very well. Keep up the good work!

— Sarah McCallum

Washtenaw County Prosecutor candidates' views on restorative justice

Laurie Wechter
Groundcover contributor

On August 4, Democratic candidates [Eli Savit](#), [Hugo Mack](#) and [Arianne Slay](#) are vying for your vote for the Washtenaw County Prosecutor position. No elected official has more power to end mass incarceration, racial injustice and the astronomical spending that bolsters the carceral system.

The County Prosecutor is in charge of all felonies and misdemeanors charged under state law. This includes both adult and juvenile charges. The three candidates are running on reform platforms, but in crucially different ways.

They address their definitions of restorative justice, and how they will use that model to create out-and-out change in the county justice system. The excerpts below have been edited for length and clarity.

What is your definition of restorative justice and do you think it can be used in cases of violent crime?

Savit: Restorative justice is a process by which, after a period of intense preparation, and if the survivor of the crime so chooses, the survivor and the person who committed harm come together in a sort of mediated session. And unlike the traditional adversarial criminal justice system, where the person who committed harm is disincentivized from taking responsibility for the harm, that person acknowledges and takes responsibility they committed. Then the survivor comes up with a concrete plan for how amends can be made. The survivors of a crime get a lot more out of it.

In regard to using restorative justice with violent crime, it is always at the survivor's choice. The powerful statistic from what Common Justice is doing in New York is that when given a choice between the adversarial justice and the restorative justice model, "90% [of victims] choose restorative justice" [Danielle Sered, director of Common Justice and author of "Until We Reckon"]. I believe that if we are really committed to standing up for survivors, we should be listening to them and respecting them as human beings. If they want to go through that process, I don't see a reason why the state should hold them back from doing so. "Until We Reckon" cites studies showing that survivors report 80-90% rates of satisfaction with restorative processes, as compared to 30% for traditional court systems.

I know everybody in this race is talking about restorative justice, and that's great. I will note that I am the candidate



On August 4, Democratic candidates Hugo Mack, Eli Savit and Arianne Slay (left to right) are vying for your vote for Washtenaw County Prosecutor. Photos submitted by candidates.

endorsed by Restorative Justice International, which is an umbrella group of over 6,000 restorative justice groups and practitioners across the globe. I think that endorsement demonstrates that I am serious about it and am going to work to bring restorative justice here to Washtenaw County.

Slay: Restorative justice involves accountability, atonement and allows everyone a safe space to discuss how this has affected them to move forward for healing. I think this will have a direct effect on recidivism rates.

Mack: Restorative justice is the system, the philosophy, where making people whole is the best use of the criminal justice system. It was started by some religious folks based on Judeo-Christian beliefs of restoring people to wholeness. It doesn't always mean somebody has to end up with a conviction or a felony.

How would you demonstrate the use of restorative justice as prosecutor?

Mack: So, if I've got a case where, let's say, somebody's mountain bike was stolen, and we can recover that mountain bike, my first concern is how do we make the victim whole. We obviously want to return the bicycle to them, but maybe they need an apology. That's only natural. Maybe they need some kind of restitution. Before we get too far in the system, I want the defense attorney, the defendant, someone from my office and the victim to at least have a chance to talk and see if we can work something out — and believe me, I think you're going to find that a lot of cases can be worked out.

As a juvenile public defender, for example, I defended hundreds of young people, and it was always with an eye toward restorative justice, before restorative justice was cool.

When I'm the Prosecutor, the main focus is going to be the victim. With violent offenders, there may be redemption possible that a victim sees in a perpetrator

doing counseling, a healing circle, probation, jail, prison; all those things will be on the table. But for me, in terms of a violent offense, there's nothing more devastating we can do than to assault a person's humanity. So, I will deal with violent offenders as necessary and sometimes we can make people whole without putting the offender in prison for 20 or 30 years.

Slay: I have a deflection and deferment program for the City of Ann Arbor. With deflection, we don't actually charge you for a crime; we look for a community-based diversion program. I also have a diversion program used after you have been charged with a crime. We work with you and community partners to get to the root cause of what caused you to be justice-involved and I will dismiss your case in the end. Almost 80% of my cases in the City of Ann Arbor have been diverted or deflected. Both programs are based in restorative justice, but depending on the situation, we have different versions of that. Sometimes there's victim-offender conferencing. Sometimes there's community service, but not as much right now, just for safety [re: COVID].

What I offer, that my opponents have not weighed in on, is restorative justice post-conviction.

I was doing one of my first murder cases, and at the time of the victim impact statement, I was standing up in court with the daughter of the victim and it was horrible. Her mom wasn't going to see her grow up, stand at her wedding or be there for the birth of her first child. She was just heartbroken. There was sobbing behind me and I had to turn around and look. What I saw was the defendant's mother and the members of the victim's family all holding each other and crying. [Both sides lost a family member in the incident.] It was very hard to see. Fast forward another year-and-a-half and I got a call from a family member of that same deceased woman, saying they wanted to meet with the man who killed their loved one. I set it up and they ended up

meeting. They wanted to tell him they had forgiven him. Now I believe that this gentleman will be spending the rest of his days in the Department of Corrections, but being forgiven mattered to him and it mattered to his family.

We can't make anyone participate in these things. There still has to be accountability and sometimes, depending on the offense, it may include a term of incarceration or probation or some type of community supervision. I think they can co-exist, and I think they should, because we need to be able to thread that needle between community safety and rehabilitation. I think my experience gives me an edge because I've been doing them for years. I ran the Domestic Violence Unit for over six and a half years at the County Prosecutor's. I did that for a long time and that experience taught me to be trauma-informed and know when to intervene and in which ways.

Savit: What I'm offering in this race is a fundamentally different way of doing things in our criminal justice system. I'm a civil rights and public interest lawyer. I've represented criminal defendants, folks in immigration proceedings, kids with disabilities, victims of consumer fraud, victims of domestic violence and spousal abuse. I've seen that the criminal justice system is at the center of a tremendous amount of cascading injustice in our society.

The era of mass incarceration has been driven by the decisions made by prosecutors. And for decades in this country, the only way that you could run for an elected prosecutor's office and win that office is to have come up through the system and taken a "tough on crime" mentality and approach.

If we are serious about ending the school-to-prison pipeline, I think it's important for prosecutors to have spent some time in schools. I'm a former classroom teacher. It's important because I know that adolescents make mistakes. If

continued next page ➡

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you want more of the same, then, I'm not your guy. I'm running to bring a civil rights perspective to this work. I think that's what we need if we are serious about turning the page on the unjust and inequitable era of mass incarceration.

A high-profile case came out of this prosecutor's office. A few years ago, we had a football fight that was between Pioneer and Huron High Schools' football teams. It was a large-scale fight that was started after a game. It was actually started by the white assistant coaches, but the black children that were involved in the fight were the ones who were charged with felonies. There were pleas from members of the school board and this community to let this go through the restorative justice process. You do not need to be saddling these young people with a felony record that is going to remain with them potentially for the rest of their lives. But the prosecutor's office refused to allow restorative justice in that case, despite the fact that for kids, in particular, you talk about restorative justice and internalizing the harm that you've done, acknowledging it and seeing the consequences of it; that's powerful for a developing mind. My disagreement with the current philosophy is one main reason that I'm running for this position.

Can you speak to how you differ from our current prosecutor?

Slay: I left the Washtenaw County Prosecutor's Office three years ago. I left because I believe that our system doesn't have to be punitive and it can be more rehabilitative and restorative than it has been in years past. I don't have blanket policies. I learned a lot being in the office. But I also learned where our system is broken. And so staying in the broken system, once you've identified strategies to make it better, isn't helping anyone.

I don't believe someone should be in jail because they can't afford to get out. I believe our jails should be reserved for people who are a danger to the community. They should not be mental health hospitals. They should not be substance detox centers.

The sheriff was one of the first at the table for making releases and asking judges to release people when our pandemic hit. Our jail, almost every day, was operating at capacity, which is 440 individuals. And with the help of the judges and the sheriff they were able to release

the majority of the people. Sometimes they're down to 130 to 150. Did we really need 440 people in the jail? I don't think we need to go back to the way we were. I hope we all were paying attention, that our judges were paying attention. Locking someone up isn't actually doing anything unless it's protecting the community. You're not going to go in with a substance abuse problem and come out and be cured.

I have the sheriff, who was one of my first endorsers, and we have agreed to do a program where if you have contact with law enforcement and you are in crisis for mental health or substance abuse or both, and you agree to go into a treatment program that is going to be funded by our new program, The Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion Program (LEAD), then as a Prosecutor, as long as you're not a danger to the community, I will hold your warrant in abeyance.

Warrant Resolution Day is something I came up with because so many people had open bench warrants in the city of Ann Arbor. Bench warrants prevent people from applying for financial assistance because you're afraid you're going to be caught or turned in. There's always the fear of incarceration, especially if you have kids and you're thinking "Who's going to take care of my kids if I get arrested?" So I developed a day with buy-in from all three of the judges where you could walk in and turn yourself in and resolve what to do about your case without the fear of going to jail. I got 16 or 17 social service agencies to come to the downtown Ann Arbor Justice Center. Everyone had their own mini booth and at the very end of it was an expungement table. Volunteer attorneys were there giving free advice on how to get a case removed from your record. At the time, Ann Arbor had over 2,300 open bench warrants. We were able to close, within a period of a week, over 300 cases! Some people walked in and had bench warrants 13, 15 years old — and just the relief! This is how I resolve cases in my court. I try to get you to work with a community partner to help address whatever brought you to the case. So if you can make amends to your community without a criminal sanction, we'll do that and I'll dismiss your case.

Prosecutor Brian Mackie has been quoted as saying, "Michigan is the most violent state in the Midwest, with a violent crime rate more than 50% higher than the state of Ohio. Seventy-four

percent of Michigan's inmates are sentenced for violent crime."
What are your thoughts on this?

Savit: I've heard that from Mr. Mackie, yes. To tout those statistics as justification for what you're doing is wrongheaded. If you are saying that we as prosecutors are operating in a state which has a tremendous amount of violent crime, you are saying that we as prosecutors have failed in our duty to keep the community safe. Crime usually starts young and it escalates. So, when you're talking about violent crime rates in Michigan, we have failed to divert people off the path of criminal activity the first time they come through the system as young people. Our failure to treat mental health issues like health issues, our failure to treat kids like kids, our failure to promote a rehabilitative approach to justice the first time someone comes in for a lower-level crime is precisely what drives this escalation. This ultimately leads to people being hurt and people being locked up for serious offenses.

I understand the position I'm running for; I'm running for Prosecutor. And if somebody murders somebody or commits rape, those are people that need to be separated from the community. I have tremendous issues with how we run our prisons and our jails, because I don't think they are particularly rehabilitative, but I understand that those are the places that we currently use to separate someone who is a threat to the community. But the Prosecutor's goal should be to never allow somebody to get to that point. Most of the crimes that come through the prosecutor's office are not those types of violent offenses. What we should be doing is diverting people off the path to violent offenses — giving them resources, giving them help, partnering them with community organizations that can do so — and then we're not going to have crime happening in the first place, which is what all of us want!

Mack: I am not impressed with the prosecutor's office as it is structured. I'm not impressed with any office that abjectly denies the existence of systemic racism. Unfortunately, we see far too many of our former clients coming back into the system. That's a tragic thing to see in Washtenaw County. As the fourth-richest county in the state, we have about a 70% recidivism rate. That means there's a disconnect. I saw that disconnect all my years as public defender, and now as a private criminal defense attorney.

I am not impressed with any office that

for a quarter-century has been in an incestuous love affair with law enforcement. I'm not impressed with any office that gives officers brownie points because of the time they've been with the department. They might say, "You've been handling cases for 10 years. We've handled a lot of cases together. Sure, we've got some questions about evidence here, but well, you're a good guy or gal. It's okay." When I'm the prosecutor, we're not going to be friends. We're going to be partners. So don't invite me to your little girl's birthday party. Don't invite me to the golf outings. I'm not coming.

I need effective, professional law enforcement to keep you safe. What I don't need are officers who think their job is to dominate and occupy as opposed to protecting. I think we see that locally and nationally.

If a police officer harms one of my citizens outside the law, and I think they violated that person, I don't care if there are 50 manuals authorizing that police conduct. I don't care what the union says, I don't care what the city council says. I care about [whether] I think you violated the law. If I feel that happened to one of my citizens, I will hold you accountable. Count on that.

Summarized Candidate Evaluations from [Liberate Don't Incarcerate](#)

- **Mack's** approach to his candidacy as prosecutor is to advocate for restorative justice, but his approach is not grounded in the actual principles or application of the model. He also repeatedly expresses a foundational belief in the need for and function of a punitive justice system.

- **Savit's** approach to his candidacy as prosecutor is to exercise the power of the prosecutor's office to challenge and reverse harms of the criminal punishment system by shifting resources and power to communities and challenging current punitive approaches.

- **Slay's** approach to her candidacy as prosecutor is to work within the current system to make improvements that focus on diversion and restorative justice, while keeping all such programming within the criminal punishment system itself, and resisting committing to actions that use the sway of the prosecutor's office to challenge its current operation and function.

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A2 City Council candidates discuss affordable housing, housing justice, homelessness with Groundcover

LINDSAY CALKA
Layout editor and summer intern

Michigan's primary election is Tuesday, August 4. Primary elections narrow the field of candidates prior to the general election and determine the party nominee of certain offices. Michigan primary elections are "open primaries," meaning voters privately choose which party to vote under, regardless of registered affiliation.

Here at Groundcover, we believe poverty is political and systemic change is necessary. Educated voter participation in the primary election is a crucial activity of electoral politics — in our political reality, this is one way to bring about housing justice in our community.

In July, I sat down to talk to 10 of the 13 Ann Arbor City Council candidates about their platforms on affordable housing, housing justice and homelessness. Candidate highlight information is only based on personal interview correspondence with Lindsay Calka. All Ann Arbor City Council candidates were offered an interview opportunity. Candidates not included: Jane Lummi and Linh Song (Ward Two), Evan Redmond (Ward Three).

Ward One



Anne Bannister (left) and Lisa Disch (right).

Anne Bannister is the Ward One incumbent, elected to the City Council in 2017. She has served on the Environmental Commission, the Natural Features subcommittee, the Housing and Human Services Advisory Board, and the City/County Corrections Advisory Board.

Lisa Disch is a professor of political theory and political science at the University of Michigan, and has lived in the first ward since moving to Ann Arbor in 2008.

LC: There is a strong network of aid in the County. However, many of the resources accessed by housing-insecure individuals are provided by local

churches or other community organizations. What obligation do you understand local government to have in providing these resources/services?

AB: Our challenges are about to increase greatly as the economic fallout of the pandemic starts to hit. The ability of the local government to replace these services with ones funded by the City is becoming greatly hampered. We will need every organization and every individual to prioritize help for those living unsheltered, if we are all to get through this as a community. We all want to make sure that the most vulnerable people in our City receive the most support we can offer, no matter which office, agency, group or organization it comes from. To be honest I don't see City Council, or any governmental body in Washtenaw County, being able to stabilize or solve homelessness unless it is somewhere in the long-term future, after many systemic changes have taken place throughout our state and nation.

LD: I understand that in terms of local government responsibility, Washtenaw County bears the lion's share of the burden in funding and providing services. I felt it was important and right that Ann Arbor appropriate funds from its community development budget to support sheltering the homeless during the COVID-19 emergency, but if and when that emergency passes, the homeless emergency will still be with us. I feel the City will still have a responsibility to participate in addressing it. Although service provision is primarily a County responsibility, one important thing that Council can do is work more boldly to revise City zoning codes to provide more housing supply.

LC: How has your seat on the Housing and Human Services Advisory Board affected your understanding of how to address homelessness in our city?

AB: Being a member of the Housing and Human Services Advisory Board is a wonderful experience. I have been gratified to learn about all the many different organizations in the City, the County and at the state level that coordinate their communications and their work to support the unsheltered community as well as other sections of the population in need. We have monthly presentations by our coordinated funders (CoFu) such as St. Joseph Mercy Hospital, Ann Arbor Community Center, the United Way and others. We then are able to recommend how funds can be distributed, and also recommend policy actions to both the City and the County. I see change coming from a number of different directions, and everyone has

not only good intentions but high levels of understanding and skills to make change a reality.

LC: How do you see your relationship to U-M affecting your ability to address the negative effects they have had on affordability in AA?

LD: I have been really excited to see faculty, student and staff constituencies, plus the graduate student (GEO) and lecturer (LEO) unions advocating on campus around the issues of affordable housing and the right to be housed. These groups are calling for U-M to be a better citizen of the city and participate in finding solutions to the city's housing shortage. I have taken part in those activities and I believe that I can be a bridge between those constituencies and members of Council who want to establish a productive collaboration between U-M and the City to create the diversity of housing opportunities that we need if we want Ann Arbor to be economically and culturally diverse, as well.

Ward Three



Tony Brown (left) and Travis Radina (right)

Tony Brown has worked closely alongside local government through a career in media, and currently works in public radio at WDET. He is a longtime resident of Ann Arbor.

Travis Radina is current President of the Jim Toy Community Center and is Ann Arbor's LGBTQ+ liaison. He has participated in various public service and political roles throughout the state of Michigan.

LC: What is your theory of change when it comes to addressing homelessness in our city?

TB: No trickle-down; it has to come from the bottom to the top. These politicians need to stop throwing around the term "affordable housing." We're building high rises with the people's money and calling it "affordable housing." They need a true plan for what's affordable and what's low-income. Then we can set up zoning laws to achieve some equity.

Start building true co-ops for poor people. Start defining what's rich and poor, what is affordable housing, and what is low-income. It makes no sense for people to be walking the streets. If we are who we say we are, we shouldn't have these issues. We build \$50 million courts we don't need; we build bike lanes that we don't need. The second thing is to empower people. We have a cycle of renters; we are a big rent town. It has to, first, be affordable for people to live in this place, and then we can start empowering people to buy their own homes. I'm talking about our poor people. There are so many other things that living in Ann Arbor doesn't lend itself to for poor people.

TR: While public-private partnerships have created a strong network of aid and resources, Council needs to more seriously invest in affordable housing and a reliable transit network that is safe and accessible for everyone — whether they are walking, cycling, driving or utilizing public transportation. Council needs to continue to creatively address some of the other root causes of homelessness: unemployment, a cycle of poverty, substance abuse and addiction, mental illness and the lack of adequate healthcare. All of these issues are likely to be exacerbated by the ongoing pandemic. That is why we should be exploring the viability of additional services and solutions, like Overdose Prevention Centers, and fundamentally changing our approach to policing and public safety to focus funding on public services proven to reduce interactions with law enforcement, rather than on traditional, punitive policing. We should revisit and/or repeal local laws that have a known racial bias — like trespass, which is overwhelmingly used to cite members of our homeless community, which in turn is disproportionately comprised of people of color — and to reimagine local policing to include more social workers, mental health professionals, and unarmed public safety officers who are connecting residents to the services they need and helping to deescalate conflict.

What are your thoughts on Council's COVID-19 response in sheltering individuals experiencing homelessness? How do you predict the transition from emergency sheltering to more permanent solutions will play out financially for the city?

TB: No municipality at any level was ready. But our city's most vulnerable people need to be protected and taken care of at all costs. This means more than

continued next page ➡

➡ from previous page

just a place to stay. A lot of people are dealing with a lot more; we need to do more. We need to think outside the box with the homeless population. A person who doesn't have a home or healthcare or a bath, we need to look out for them. It's all hands on deck. Are we moving them into assisted living? We have to put this population over the park. It can't be business as usual.

LC: How do you envision Council's pandemic response to unsheltered individuals needing to change over the coming months?

TR: The current pandemic has made Council even less accessible to the homeless population — at a time when the voices of the housing-insecure are critically important to finding viable long-term solutions to our housing crisis. I recently had an extensive conversation with a community member who is housing-insecure. He expressed his frustration with a seeming inability to access remote/video Council Meetings during the pandemic. He doesn't have reliable access to the internet and therefore is excluded from participation. The unfortunate reality is that it already takes a certain amount of privilege to participate in civic engagement. That is something we need to acknowledge, because the challenges many of us are facing now, for the first time, are challenges that others face every day when trying to interact with their government.

Ward Four



Jack Eaton (above left), Jen Eyer (above right), and Mozghan Savabieasfahani (above)

Jack Eaton is the incumbent for the fourth ward, elected to City Council in 2013. He has spent a majority of his career in law representing labor unions and is an active participant in both the Ann Arbor and Michigan Democratic Parties.

Jen Eyer, while working as a journalist and editor for MLive and The Ann Arbor News for 16 years, has been involved in the Ann Arbor community in a wide variety of leadership roles. In 2016, she was unanimously chosen to

fill a seat on the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners.

Mozghan Savabieasfahani is an award-winning environmental toxicologist and human rights activist. She is currently in the Department of Environmental Health Sciences at the University of Michigan.

LC: What do you think is the biggest contributor to Ann Arbor's housing crisis? How do you plan to address this?

JEaton: Across the spectrum, our affordability problem is a crisis for people in most income brackets. So first, there are some of us on Council who are trying to use the tools in our zoning code to obtain affordable units or funding from developers. We have a lot of development happening in town. If these developments include just a handful of affordable units, it helps a little bit, but it's not the way we find ourselves out of the crisis. When a developer contributes money to our housing fund, then we can leverage that with other sources and build our own affordable units. That affordability will not expire if it's owned by the city. The proposed millage is also a great opportunity to fund this.

JEyer: Over the past few decades, the number of jobs has grown by tens of thousands but the number of new housing units has not kept pace. This lack of housing supply coupled with high demand has driven up prices so much that many people who work here are unable to find housing they can afford. More than 84,000 people now commute into Ann Arbor every weekday, increasing traffic, causing wear and tear on our roads, and releasing harmful carbon dioxide emissions. Increasing the supply of market-rate housing will help stabilize prices and fight gentrification, but that is not enough to address the crisis. We also need to use public dollars to add affordable housing units in the city. I will: protect the stable, multi-year source of funding for affordable housing from the type of potential cuts supported by the incumbent, propose setting aside a portion of taxes from new developments as additional revenue for the affordable housing fund, move forward on the city's proposed affordable housing sites, and, support feasible affordable housing proposals from private developers

MS: I will demand a resolution committing City Council to (1) the abolition of single-family zoning, as Minneapolis has already done; (2) the construction of good quality public housing, so that every minimum-wage worker in Ann Arbor can actually live in Ann Arbor; (3) telling Congress to repeal the Faircloth Amendment, which has eagerly illegalized public housing; and (4) providing enough funding for the Shelter

Association of Washtenaw County to eliminate homelessness.

I would favor using the affordable housing millage to construct 1,500 units of affordable public housing. Over time, the rent on those units could yield substantial revenue to the City. Development should be by and for the public, not the private developers' benefit. The private developers have had their fun.

LC: How would you articulate the intersection of racial justice and housing justice?

JEaton: Our history of racism has placed a greater challenge on minorities. Minority communities are so much more often disadvantaged economically. They don't have access to well-paying jobs, adequate healthcare. It prevents them from participating in the housing market, the job market. I'm proud that for the past five years I've been working hard to make sure we have a fully empowered, fully independent police oversight commission. I believe the country's long racial history has manifested in policing practices and I've been proud to advocate for the oversight committee. Police shouldn't oversee themselves. I've been working with my colleagues to improve this commission.

JEyer: Where a person lives, where a child grows up, has a huge impact on their economic opportunities, their health, and their quality of life. Ann Arbor is the eighth most socioeconomically segregated metro area in the United States, and studies show that racial segregation closely mirrors socioeconomic segregation. This is directly due to the housing policies of our local governments over the past decades. It's not enough to say that blatantly racist housing policies are a thing of the past. Decades of structural racism have brought us to this point, and the current lack of housing supply continues to exacerbate this socioeconomic and racial segregation. As a council member, I will actively work to reduce segregation and open up opportunities that will lead to a stronger, more diverse community.

MS: It is private development which the city has favored for at least 20 years that has brought us to this point where we see the impacts: no affordable housing and segregated towns. One way to break that cycle would be to insist on public housing and to make sure the University makes good on its promise of 10% black enrollment. I am for the abolition of single-family zoning but only so we can make great, solid public housing. It helps maintain African Americans in this town so they can live here. People say this is a good place to live. How is this a good place to live, if we've effectively pushed Black people and people of color out of this town for decades?



Dan Michniewicz (above left), David Silkworth (above right), and Erica Briggs (above)

Ward Five

Erica Briggs is a current Ann Arbor Planning Commissioner and has a history of serving on boards and commissions in the community. She holds both a master's degree in public administration and a Ph.D. in political science.

Dan Michniewicz works in the Ann Arbor food service industry and is running for Council on a platform that is strongly tied to his past community organizing efforts.

David Silkworth is a licensed Property and Casualty Insurance Adjuster and is actively engaged in many elements of local government and other local organizations.

LC: What do you think is the biggest contributor to Ann Arbor's housing crisis?

EB: The thing is, fundamentally, housing supply has not kept up with demand. That is an issue of rising costs to buyers and renters. The university is adding a lot of students, putting pressure on the private market. The economy is shifting towards more tech — for them housing is more affordable. We have the job center for Washtenaw County, which is great, but puts a big demand on our housing as well. Transportation is the second-largest cost. It is challenging to bring down the cost of living, but it is possible to let people live car-free and take down that cost instead. That means they can reduce their budget to live in a community that is more expensive.

DM: It's the fact we treat housing as a commodity. If we guaranteed that everyone would have a roof over their head, it wouldn't be an issue. I desire to take control of the housing industry away from the private sector. So, one of the aspects is increasing public funding so we can increase the amount of public/social housing relative to privately held housing. These are things [current Council] seems to be taking steps towards; they are introducing ballot language to get a millage for

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Published in *The New York Times*, this photo depicts the first Women's March in 1917.

Women's equality: 19th Amendment turns 100

The Declaration of Independence proclaims, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal..." It wasn't until 1920, however, that millions of American women voted for the first time.

The 13 original colonies drafted their own constitutions and it was up to the newly independent states to decide if women and black people in their political jurisdiction could vote. New Jersey's constitution granted voting rights to all inhabitants of the state, including women and African Americans. Women in New Jersey exercised those rights until the legislature negated them for partisan reasons in 1807. The rest of the new independent states reserved voting rights for white males who owned property.

Before the First Women's Rights Convention in Seneca Falls, New York in 1848, American women and their allies in England endured a period of marginalization and painful inequality. According to historian Shelley Wolbrink, women of the 1700s were not as concerned with voting as they were with issues of divorce, adultery and custody rights. Those concerns were prevalent among married women. The subsequent rise in single women in England and America led to the increased campaigning to secure more women's rights, including the right to vote.

However, the Victorian image of womanhood at the start of the industrial revolution was women who were expected to behave with politeness, meekness and delicacy. As 18th-century French political philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau said of women, "[A] woman's empire is an empire of gentleness, skill, and obligingness; her orders are caresses, her threats are tears." American society of the 1700s and 1800s frowned at brash women and considered their behavior an embarrassment to their family and community. Sadly, this slave-holding, patriarchal society believed that a woman's place was in



WILL SHAKESPEARE
Groundcover vendor No. 258

the home. Women were considered to have natural maternal instincts and devotion to the family. Men of that time saw women as the weaker sex that needed to be protected and hidden from the outside world.

How women won the right to vote

Beginning in the mid-19th century, women in both America and England started a revolution of the heart and mind, aimed at securing their liberty, political equality and the promise of inclusive democracy. When Elizabeth Cady Stanton and her abolitionist husband stopped in England during their honeymoon, she was appalled to find that English men believed that "women are supposed to be seen, not to be heard." In 1848, she invited Philadelphia abolitionist and women's rights advocate Lucretia Mott to visit Seneca Falls. They with other local women to plan the First American Woman's Right Convention, held in Seneca Falls that July.

Mott had served as the president of the American Equal Rights Association and helped to form the Philadelphia Female Anti-Slavery Society in 1833. She and Stanton prepared the key agenda for the convention. According to history.com, "Both leaders wanted to discuss the social, civil, and religious condition and rights of women. They declared that women were citizens equal to men with the fundamen-

tal right to the effective franchise."

Two hundred women and 40 male abolitionists participated, including the great orator Fredrick Douglass. The convention came up with 12 resolutions to be voted on. Eleven passed unanimously. However, the resolution on women's right to vote received a split decision. Participants disagreed about the merits and urgency of the women's right to vote.

Susan B. Anthony, an anti-slavery leader of the temperance movement, met with Stanton in 1851. They became the iconic leaders of the suffrage movement and the long-standing campaign for women's equality. During the late 19th century, the two leaders traveled to newly organized western territories and asked the legislatures to grant western women the right to vote. Their strategy worked. By the late 19th century and early 20th century, virtually all the western states recognized women's right to vote in local and federal elections.

Anthony and Stanton led the movement for more than two decades. They came up with a two-pronged strategy for securing the women's right to vote. Simultaneously, they initiated state-by-state campaigns and a lobbying campaign in the U.S. Congress. They wrote and edited three volumes of books on the suffrage movement. They were in their 80s when they passed away in the early 1900s. Before she retired, Anthony hand-picked Carrie Chapman Catt to replace her as president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association. Their efforts culminated in the passage of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1919 and ratification by the states in 1920.

They led a revolution that has continued to bring greater liberty, freedom and equality to American women and oppressed women all over the world. The American woman's sense of political freedom and cultural expressions has become a source of hope and courage for millions

of women in developed and developing nations. When former U.S. Secretary of State and former presidential candidate Hillary Clinton attended an international conference on women's rights in 1995, she coined the phrase "Women's Rights Are Human Rights."

Progress during the first 50 years after the 19th Amendment

In 1921, women leaders of the suffrage movement proposed the first Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. This proposed gender equality amendment was supposed to guarantee that "civil and legal rights will not be denied on the basis of sex."

The stock market collapse of 1929 with the Great Depression of the 1930s and early 1940s, and the necessities of World War II, had huge effects on women. Hollywood movies and entertainment were changing women's self-image and their fashion preferences. The public introduction of a two-piece bikini on July 5, 1946 by French designer Louis Réard made huge waves in Europe and America and led to a relaxation of public decency standards for women.

While young women of the 1950s danced to music of "American Bandstand" and weekend variety shows, issues of discrimination, racism and racial inequality continued to stain the nation's political fabric. The 19th Amendment exposed more fully the intersectionality of being a woman and a black voter. Such a duality is reminiscent of the 1913 Woman Suffrage Procession, the first organized march on Washington. When asked to march separately at the tail end of the parade, journalist Ida B. Wells refused. She took black female sorority members from Howard University to march with whites in the front.

see **SUFFRAGE** page 10 ➡

Prosecutors and restorative justice

SUSAN BECKETT

"Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home..."

— Eleanor Roosevelt

Prosecutor races have attracted increasing attention in the past decade as prosecutorial discretion emerged as a major factor in the prison and probation boom. According to the NAACP, approximately 2.7% of the adult American population — that is one out of every 37 adults — is under some kind of correctional supervision. The incarceration rate for Blacks is five times that of whites. Washtenaw County is no exception when it comes to harsh sentences and racial discrepancies. The impending retirement of long-time County Prosecutor Brian Mackie has opened the door for change.

Proponents of restorative justice are scrutinizing contenders for a candidate who embraces alternatives to automatic incarceration. They helped organize a protest outside the County Courthouse on June 17, 2020 while young Jacob LaBelle received a harsh sentence, as

requested by Mackie. This happened despite the victim seeking a restorative justice proceeding and pleading that LaBelle receive no prison time. The court followed Mackie's recommendations and refused the victim's requests.

But LaBelle is a young black man. The news account made him sound like trouble. The "news" account was based solely on the prosecution's assertions. Joe Summers, minister of the Episcopal Church of the Incarnation, has known LaBelle since he was five years old. The version he tells is likely the one that influenced the victim to request a restorative justice process rather than a criminal trial.

According to Summers, "[We need to] challenge a justice system that is grinding up our kids of color in courtrooms where we can't take cell phone videos to show what is going on and where the statistics and facts are hidden."

Summers' version of the shooting

Jacob was coming out of dinner to find he was blocked in by a Walgreens delivery truck. Mr. Ritter

(the truck driver) and Jacob exchanged heated words about moving the truck as Mr. Ritter was unloading.

Mr. Ritter testified at the trial that he pushed a stack of totes used for unloading items onto Jacob because he thought Jacob had knocked some totes over earlier, not realizing that Jacob was moving the totes to speed up the loading so the truck could be moved. Jacob was knocked back by the totes falling on him and moved away from Mr. Ritter.

Mr. Ritter testified that he then kept moving towards Jacob and Jacob warned him that he had a gun. (It is my understanding that Jacob was carrying a gun because he has feared for his safety since he and his girlfriend were brutally kidnapped and assaulted six weeks earlier — an incident that resulted in severe PTSD for Jacob.) Mr. Ritter testified that he kicked and punched Jacob. When Jacob took his gun out, Ritter then struggled with Jacob to get the gun out of his hand. A Walgreens employee testified that he tried to pull Jacob and Mr. Ritter apart by putting his arms around Jacob from behind when the gun went off.

Jacob put the gun down and

immediately called 911. Jacob then waited until the police and EMT arrived to help Mr. Ritter. Mr. Ritter was successfully treated at the University Hospital and has fully recovered from his wound.

After the trial, Mr. Ritter wrote to the judge, asking for a referral to restorative justice. In it, he wrote, "I am not interested in a punitive sentence being given to Jacob LaBelle. I do not think putting him in prison will address my issues or help us understand what happened that night or make anyone better going forward." Jacob joined Mr. Ritter in asking to go through such a process.

Though both parties wanted a restorative justice process, the prosecutor objected and the judge denied the requests.

We need to draw attention to the arrests of people of color, but it's equally important to shed light on what happens to them after they are arrested. We must hold prosecutors and judges to account by requiring them to be transparent about how they handle cases, who gets plea deals and why prosecutors decide to bring the charges they do.

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Green beans amandine

ELIZABETH BAUMAN
Groundcover contributor

2 1/2 pounds green beans, trimmed
1 teaspoon kosher salt, plus a bit more
1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter
1 cup sliced almonds, preferably skin-on
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

Cook green beans in a large pot of boiling salted water until crisp-tender, 5–7 minutes. Drain, then

immediately transfer to a large bowl filled with ice water. Drain again and then pat dry.

Melt butter in a large, deep-sided skillet over medium heat. Add almonds and salt, and stir to coat. Cook, stirring occasionally, until fragrant and beginning to brown, about 3 minutes. Add green beans and lemon juice and stir to coat; cook just until warmed through.

Transfer green beans to a platter. Pour butter sauce and almonds over and serve.

Back against the wall

RON PAGERESKI
Groundcover contributor

Homeless man on Liberty Street,
alone he sits, back to the wall,
his life took a free fall.
Once he dined with royalty,
now he sails a stormy sea.
The street is the world he knows,
from his eye a tear flows.

Brother can you spare a dime?
A word with you if you've got the time.
Once I had a wealthy life, lost it all, lost my wife.
The bottle was the god I praised,
sometimes made me half-crazed.
Lost my job, lost my home.
No one's fault, just my own.
Please don't take the road I chose,
outside one winter, I almost froze.
I rely on help from kind men's hearts,
but some look hateful,
eyes sharp as darts.

I hope to rise up one day, stand tall.
but that's hard to do when your back is against the wall.



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During the LiveStream mass, make a spiritual communion by praying this or a similar prayer:

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unit myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

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| 26 | E | V | E | R | S | O | U | S | E | D | C | D |
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| 41 | C | E | D | A | R | E | S | C | R | O | N | C |
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| 53 | E | N | E | H | E | A | R | T | H | S | Y | E |
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